

IN THE CLAIMS:

Amend claims 1, 10, 17 and 19 as shown in the following listing of claims, which replaces all previous listings and versions of claims.

1. (currently amended) A retractable-nib writing tool having a retractable writing body slidable in forward and backward directions in a shaft tube and having a sealing lid and a sealing tube which seal ~~the~~ a writing nib of the writing body in association with the forward and backward movements of the writing body, wherein: the sealing lid is independent of and not mounted to the sealing tube, the sealing lid and a guide tube fixed to the writing body are linked by a plurality of thin line portions, ~~the sealing lid and~~ the thin line portions are ~~formed integrally,~~ disposed at equal intervals around the sealing lid and constitute therewith a unitary structure, and the sealing lid is opened and closed relative to the sealing tube by the forward and backward movements of the thin line portions; and wherein at least one thin line portion out of the plurality of thin line portions which are advanced by the forward motion of the guide tube is regulated and other thin line portions can be flexibly bent and deformed.

2.-5. (canceled)

6. (previously presented) A retractable-nib writing tool according to claim 1; wherein both the sealing force between the sealing lid and the sealing tube and the sealing force between the writing nib and the sealing tube are set to 50 to 100 kPa.

7. (previously presented) A retractable-nib writing tool according to claim 1; wherein at least either one of the sealing lid and the sealing tube is composed of a material whose water vapor transmissivity prescribed under ASTM F 1249 is not more than $3.0 \text{ (g. mm/m}^2\text{.day)}$ under the condition of 37.8°C (90% RH).

8. (previously presented) A retractable-nib writing tool having a retractable writing body in a shaft tube and having a sealing lid and a sealing tube which seal the writing nib of the writing body in association with the forward and backward movements of the writing body, wherein: the sealing tube is fixed within the shaft tube, the sealing lid and a guide tube are arranged respectively ahead of and behind the sealing tube to fix the guide tube to the writing body and the guide tube and the sealing lid are linked with a plurality of flexible thin line portions, so configured that, while an opening at the forward end of the sealing tube is closed as the plurality of thin line portions keep the sealing lid in a state of being pressed against the sealing tube when the

writing body is in a retracted position, the sealing lid turns to open the opening at the forward end of the sealing tube as the forward movement of any of the plurality of thin line portions relative to the sealing tube is restricted and those of the rest of the thin line portions are permitted when the writing body is to move forward.

9. (previously presented) A retractable-nib writing tool according to claim 8; wherein, out of the plurality of thin line portions, the thin line portion whose forward movement is to be regulated is provided with a bulged portion, and the outer circumferential part of the sealing tube is provided with engaging step portions to engage with the bulged portion when the writing body moves forward.

10. (currently amended) A retractable-nib writing tool according to claim 8; wherein the plurality of thin line portions comprises at least three thin line portions ~~sealing lid and the thin line portions are integrally formed.~~

11. (previously presented) A retractable-nib writing tool according to claim 8; wherein a springy member is disposed between the sealing tube and the guide tube and, when the writing body is in a retracted position, the plurality of thin line portions keep the sealing lid in a state of being pressed against said sealing tube by the urging of said springy member.

12. (previously presented) A retractable-nib writing tool according to claim 11; wherein the plurality of thin line portions are arranged between the guide tube and the sealing lid so that, when the writing body is in the retracted position, the direction of the force working from the plurality of thin line portions on the sealing lid is identical with the axial direction of the shaft tube.

13. (previously presented) A retractable-nib writing tool according to claim 8; wherein the plurality of thin line portions are arranged along the inner circumferential face of the shaft tube and a lubricant is applied to the surfaces of the plurality of thin line portions.

14. (previously presented) A retractable-nib writing tool according to claim 8; wherein the thin line portions each have a plurality of reduced-diameter portions along the length thereof, and the thin line portions can be bent at the reduced-diameter portions.

15. (previously presented) A retractable-nib writing tool according to claim 8; wherein the tips of the plurality of thin line portions are arranged at equal intervals along the outer circumferential part of the sealing lid.

16. (previously presented) A retractable-nib writing tool according to claim 8; wherein a soft member is disposed in a position where the sealing lid is opposite the sealing tube.

17. (currently amended) A writing tool comprising: a tubular member having an open front end; a writing body axially slidable in the tubular member between a forward position in which a writing nib of the writing body extends through the open front end of the tubular member and a rearward position in which the writing nib is retracted into the tubular member; a sealing tube disposed in the tubular member at a front portion thereof and having a front end through which the writing nib passes as the writing body moves forward in the tubular member to its forward position and behind which the writing nib retracts when the writing body is in its rearward position; a sealing lid disposed forwardly of the front end of the sealing tube and being movable to open and close the front end of the sealing tube; a guide tube slidably disposed in the tubular member ~~in contact~~ to undergo axial sliding movement with the writing body and through which extends a portion of the writing body; a spring disposed in the tubular member and interposed between the sealing tube and the guide tube to resiliently urge the guide tube and the writing body rearwardly to normally position the writing body in its rearward position; and a plurality of flexible elongate

members each connected at a front end thereof to the sealing lid, one or more of the flexible elongate members being connected to the guide tube so that when the guide tube moves rearwardly the one or more flexible elongate members pull the sealing lid to close the front end of the sealing tube and when the guide tube moves forwardly the one or more flexible members slacken to permit the sealing lid to open the front end of the sealing tube, and another of the flexible elongate members being slidable relative to the guide tube and engagable with the sealing tube during forward movement of the writing body to restrict forward movement of the another flexible elongate member so that further forward movement of the writing body causes to permit the sealing lid to pivot about the region where the front end of the another flexible elongate member connects to the sealing lid to open the front end of the sealing tube.

18. (previously presented) A writing tool according to claim 17; wherein the sealing lid and the flexible elongate members comprise a unitary structure.

19. (currently amended) A writing tool according to claim 17; wherein the plurality of flexible elongate members are comprises at least three flexible elongate members arranged at equal intervals around the sealing lid.

20. (previously presented) A writing tool according to claim 17; wherein the flexible elongate members are disposed along an inner circumferential surface of the tubular member and are coated with a lubricant.

21. (previously presented) A writing tool according to claim 17; wherein the another flexible elongate member has an enlarged portion; and the sealing tube has an engaging portion positioned to engage with the enlarged portion during forward movement of the writing body to thereby prevent further forward movement of the another flexible elongate member while the writing body continues forward movement to its forward position.

22. (previously presented) A writing tool according to claim 21; wherein the engaging portion of the sealing tube comprises a step portion of the sealing tube that protrudes from an outer side face of the sealing tube.

23. (previously presented) A writing tool according to claim 17; further including a knocking member connected to a rear end of the writing body and projecting outwardly through an open rear end of the tubular member.

24. (previously presented) A writing tool according to claim 17; wherein the flexible elongate members comprise flexible line